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**STATE BOARD URGES FERC TO MAKE SAFETY  
TOP PRIORITY IN FALL RIVER LNG REVIEW**  
*Calls for Expansion of Suitability Study to Include All Regional LNG Proposals*

The Massachusetts Energy Facilities Siting Board ("Board") today joined other state and local officials in asking the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission ("FERC") to prioritize safety in its consideration of a proposed LNG terminal in Fall River and to widen its study through a comparative evaluation of all LNG project proposals along the northeast coastline.

In evaluating LNG proposals within and outside the New England region, the Board noted that the FERC did not weigh or rank projects based on safety and environmental concerns with their accompanying natural gas supply costs, needs and reliability to determine which project is most suitable overall.

"The Siting Board agrees with Governor Romney and Fall River officials who maintain strong concerns over the safety impact of the project to the residents of the Fall River area and the need for a more comprehensive analysis by federal regulators," said Board Chairman Paul G. Afonso.

In its filing with the FERC, the Board called attention to the federal regulator's finding that more people could be affected by a major LNG water spill at the Fall River site than at two other proposed deepwater LNG port sites outside of Massachusetts. It further noted that 12,000 residents live in 5,100 housing units within one mile of the project and that 1,200 units are within one-half mile of the proposed Weaver's Cove storage tank.

*"more"*

Fall River Mayor Edward M. Lambert, Jr. said, "I appreciate Governor Romney and his administration's attention to this critical issue to our citizens. In a post 9/11 environment it does not make sense to site an LNG import terminal in our densely populated urban neighborhood. I applaud the Energy Facilities Siting Board's request and expect the FERC to conduct the comparative analysis recommended that will yield vital energy supplies in a safer location."

Last September, Governor Romney requested that the FERC conduct a supplemental environmental impact study to include a more thorough analysis of potential impact of the Fall River proposal and how it would meet state regulatory requirements. The Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs has also requested additional environmental studies under its authority.

The FERC's Final Environmental Impact Statement for the proposed Weaver's Cove project was issued last month and represents the conclusions of the federal regulator's environmental staff. The date for a final decision from the FERC has not been announced.

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